



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Rest Easy

National Sleep Awareness Week — March 5–11

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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Getting enough rest each night is just as important as diet and exercise for good health. Dr. Daniel Chapman is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. He's joining us today to discuss the importance of getting enough sleep. Welcome to the show, Dan.

[Dr. Chapman] Thank you, Bob. It's good to be here.

[Dr. Gaynes] Daniel, how much sleep does the average adult need?

[Dr. Chapman] It's recommended that the average adult gets between seven and nine hours of sleep per night, but we know about one third of Americans are not getting this amount. The National Sleep Foundation, however, emphasizes that there is no magic number and that our sleep needs may vary. A rule of thumb is you should get enough sleep so that you don't find yourself drowsy or nodding off the next day.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the main causes of sleep problems?

[Dr. Chapman] Well, I think the single biggest problem, Bob, is that people simply don't recognize that sleep is as important to good health as exercise and diet. However, there also are medical issues that may impair sleep, such as sleep apnea which the individual may cease breathing while they're sleeping and restless leg syndrome which is a very uncomfortable kicking or crawling sensation that may also hinder sleep.

[Dr. Gaynes] What kinds of problems can be caused by lack of sleep?

[Dr. Chapman] Lack of sleep is responsible for falling asleep at work or at school, increased absenteeism. It's also been shown that not getting enough sleep has been linked to impaired driving and vehicular crashes, and more recently, weight gain and diabetes have been associated with insufficient sleep.

[Dr. Gaynes] What suggestions do you have for someone who's not getting enough rest?

[Dr. Chapman] I would encourage everyone to practice good sleep habits which include sleeping in a quiet, cool sleep environment, getting up and going to bed at the same time

each day, making sure that they use the bed only for sleep, and engaging in regular exercise, however, not too close to bedtime.

[Dr. Gaynes] Dan, where can listeners get more information about getting enough sleep?

[Dr. Chapman] They can go to our website, www.cdc.gov/sleep.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Dan. I've been talking today with Dr. Dan Chapman of CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion about the importance of getting enough sleep.

Remember, adults need seven to nine hours of sleep each day. Good sleep habits include a cool, quiet sleep environment; going to bed and getting up at the same time every day; and avoiding alcohol and exercise close to bedtime. If you're having trouble sleeping, talk to your health care provider.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.